View from the Office

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ABSTRACT

This image shows a view across the Drawing Room at Doddington Hall, near Lincoln. The tapestry on a conservation frame in the foreground depicts the mythical ‘Trojan Horse’, and is one of a series of tapestries from the Yellow Bedroom at Doddington which depict scenes from the Trojan Wars. Having been taken down from the walls during 2014 for the first time in over 250 years, these tapestries are currently undergoing extensive conservation. Once conserved, the tapestries will go on public display, with new interpretation based on my research findings revealing their secrets to the public for the very first time.
My research is using Doddington Hall as a primary case study, to show how the use of tapestries within interior decorative schemes in the eighteenth-century English country house contributed to the display and dissemination of personal and class identity by landowners. The study has involved me working as part of the conservation team at Doddington, to allow the tapestries to tell their own stories, thread by thread. This close, direct study of historic objects gives the researcher an opportunity to view the past through a different lens; allowing them to uncover narratives and histories which are often not available through the study of archival or secondary source material. This method of working also engenders a sense of continuity with past generations: in the image, the conservation work is watched over by eighteenth-century landowner John Hussey Delaval, who had the tapestries hung, and who looks on from a portrait in the distance. Thus, in working from this ‘office’, my research seems less disconnected from its subject than it might otherwise be.

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KEYWORDS
Conservation | Tapestry | Trojan Horse | Doddington Hall | Eighteenth Century | Material Culture | History | Heritage

BIBLIOGRAPHY
